STATE UNIVERSITY OF NEW YORK AT ALBANY

SCHOOL OF PUBLIC HEALTH

CERTIFICATE IN GLOBAL HEALTH STUDIES

PROPOSED STARTING DATE: FALL 2014 UPON NYS REGISTRATION

I. INTRODUCTION AND RATIONALE

The School of Public Health at the State University of New York at Albany is proposing the introduction of a Certificate in Global Health Studies. The proposed Graduate Certificate in Global Health Studies is being developed in response to several trends including the interconnectedness of the world today; increased awareness of the spread and impact of health crises and risks worldwide; and as part of the growing global focus of the UAlbany curriculum. Global health “encompass[es] both domestic and international health including health conditions, organized social responses, and a systems approach” (Merson and Chapman, 2009). It involves the most fundamental values of a society: social justice and health equity; collaboration and partnerships; capacity building; and ethical reasoning. Students of global health acquire competencies that can be applied in both international and domestic settings, including project management, strategic analysis, and social, cultural, and political awareness.

Competition for students requires that every school of public health respond to the increasing interest in and demand for global health curriculum. Campuses across the U.S. are seeing a dramatic increase in courses, programs, institutes, centers, and departments of global health. The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill recently renamed its school of public health the Gillings School of Global Public Health. Other schools of public health are developing full graduate degrees in global health. In 2008 the Consortium of Universities for Global Health (CUGH) was established to promote and facilitate the growth of global health as an academic field of study.

The Association of Schools of Public Health (ASPH) has undertaken a major project to establish the global health competencies for masters-level public health students, a project involving representatives from a large cross-section of ASPH member schools. The goal of the project is to identify the knowledge, skills, and perspectives that are expected of students in global health programs. Philip Nasca, Dean of the UAlbany School of Public Health, is a member of the leadership group responsible for the guidance and oversight of the project and the development of the seven competency domains: Capacity-building; Collaboration and Partnering; Ethical Reasoning and Professional Practice; Health Equity and Social Justice Leadership; Project and Process Management; Socio-cultural and Political Awareness; and Strategic Analysis and Evaluation. Carol Whittaker, Assistant Dean for Global Health and Director of the Center for Global Health, is a member of the team developing the core competencies for capacity building. The competencies identified for each domain will guide the development of learning objectives for all new global health courses and programs.
Expected Market and Demand

Target Audience

The Certificate in Global Health Studies is designed to attract both current MPH students and practicing public health professionals who are interested in expanding their understanding of global health issues. The ability to complete the Certificate via distance learning will be useful for working professionals whose interest in continuing education can be hindered by logistic barriers, such as time and distance.

A recent survey conducted by the UA SPH demonstrates that student interest and demand for global health courses continue to grow. This survey was conducted in the summer of 2010 as part of the global health strategic planning process. Student responses indicated the following:

- 84% said the School of Public Health must take a prominent role in global health in order to stay competitive with other schools of public health;
- 55% indicated that global health was a priority for them as students at the School;
- 44% expressed interest in pursuing additional or new opportunities to participate in international education, training, or exchange programs as part of their studies at the School;
- 39% said they intended to pursue a career in global public health immediately upon graduation; and
- 76% said they would like to apply their public health education in an international setting at some point in their careers.

The Graduate Certificate in Global Health Studies has been developed to meet this demand and is designed to give current and future public health professionals and leaders, the knowledge and skills to effectively address major global health challenges.

II. PLAN OF STUDY (15 CREDITS)

The program requires the completion of 15 graduate course credits or 5 courses, many of which are in the MPH program as electives or core courses. All of the courses will be offered online through Blackboard at the University at Albany.

Students in the program must maintain a cumulative grade point average of 3.0 or higher and file an application for Certificate completion within four years of admission. Course waivers can be obtained only through prior approval. There is a transfer credit limit of one course (3 credits).

Students who are enrolled in a School degree program and would like to pursue the Certificate can do so if they fulfill the above-mentioned requirements for degree completion.

Admissions

The Certificate in Global Health will be available for all currently matriculated University at Albany graduate students (masters and doctoral students) as well as those meeting the following admission standards and requirements for graduate admission:
• Proof of a baccalaureate or graduate degree (preferably in public health) from academic institution(s) where degree was earned (an official English translation should be provided if the original is not in English);

• Official transcripts from academic institution(s) where degree was earned (an official English translation should be provided if the original is not in English);

• A letter of intent describing the applicant’s background and his/her reasons for pursuing the Certificate;

• Evidence of proficiency in English for international applicants; and

• A completed application and fee.

Prerequisite Guidelines

Students should realize that some of the courses in the certificate program have prerequisites that they will need to satisfy either through equivalent coursework or background

Students with background in global public health may not need to take prerequisites in the core curriculum, but it will be assumed that a basic knowledge of these topics exists. They will need to demonstrate their expertise and request specific prerequisite waivers from the instructor of the class.

Retention Standards

Students enrolled in the certificate program should maintain a 3.0 GPA or higher to stay in the certificate program. If a student does not receive a GPA of 3.0 or higher, a meeting with the Director of the program will occur to discuss individual student progress. The maximum amount of time to complete the certificate program courses upon admission is 5 years.

Student Advisement

Because the certificate program includes a prescribed set of five courses with no electives, students in the program will not need routine advising. Students in academic difficulty or those who are interested in career guidance will be advised by members of the SPH faculty and administration.

Completion Requirements:

There is a transfer credit limit of one course (3 credits) from another institution. Many of the Global Health Certificate courses require a pre-requisite public health course, e.g. an introductory epidemiology course. Prerequisites completed at another university do not count against the 3-credit transfer limit.
III. RELATIONSHIP WITH DEGREE PROGRAMS

Students who have completed the Certificate and wish to apply these courses to a degree at the School must:

1. Maintain a cumulative grade point average of 3.0 or higher while pursuing the certificate
2. Have completed the courses within five years of application to the degree program
3. Fulfill the admission requirements of the desired degree program

Course Waivers/Transfers/Replacement

Course waivers will not be granted. However, course transfers and replacement of courses with higher-level courses based on previously taken courses and/or experimental knowledge will be considered on a case by case basis. The prerequisites required for some of the courses may be waived based on instructor discretion. Transfers are limited to one class since the certificate program is short in duration.

Using Certificate Courses towards a Graduate Degree

Students enrolled in the Global Health Certificate program will be allowed to count six of the certificate credits toward the completion of the Master of Public Health or Master of Science degree

IV. CURRICULUM (5 courses, 15 credits)

All of the Certificate courses can be electives in the MPH program at the School of Public Health. Students who earn the Certificate and are admitted to pursue an MPH can have these courses applied to the MPH requirements.

The courses in the proposed certificate include:

- **HPM 645, Introduction to Global Health (3 credits)**
  This survey course explores major international public health issues as well as measures that can be taken to improve health outcomes in specific population groups. Specific issues addressed include infectious disease, reproductive health, nutrition, chronic disease, mental health, unintentional injuries, violence, and the relationship of health and economic development. International aid programs and projects to improve health are also considered. Each student selects a national public health system for an in-depth study, identifying the major population-based health issues and proposing interventions for improving health outcomes.

- **EPI 630, Global Perspectives in Epidemiology (3 credits)**
  Global health is of critical importance with the emergence of new diseases such as SARS and H1N1, the potential threat of biological agents such as anthrax, the continued prevalence of
diseases such as malaria and dengue, the co-evolution of HIV and multiple drug resistant tuberculosis, the return of once-vanquished diseases like polio, and the export of chronic diseases from industrialized countries to the rest of the world. This course will explore key epidemiologic principles to address these issues and suggest interventions to improve poor health and reduce disease and disability worldwide.

- **HPM 655, International Health Economics (3 credits)**

This course is designed to introduce basic economic theories, concepts, and tools and apply them specifically to the health care sector under a variety of contexts. In this course, the structure, organization, activities, functions, and problems of health and medical care are considered from a specific point of view--that of the economist. This economic point of view is based on three fundamental observations: resources are scarce relative to wants; resources have alternative uses, making choice necessary; and unique solutions may not exist, since there are significant variations in the relative importance that people in society attach to wants. Therefore, the basic economic problem then becomes how to allocate scarce resources so as to satisfy best human wants (individual and/or societal). The purpose of this course is to enhance the ability to use the theories, concepts, and tools of economic analysis to evaluate, systematically, the features, utilization patterns, delivery mechanisms of the health care system, to ensure that more efficient and equitable allocation decisions are attained. This analysis focuses on a variety of health care systems and how the governmental role in these systems varies in the corrections in the market and in the provision and consumption of health care services.

- **HPM 656, Comparative Health Systems (3 credits)**

Every country confronts choices about how to organize and deliver health care for its people. This course explores the diversity of models that have been established to respond to particular forces and circumstances including specific political and economic factors and demographics. Students will have the opportunity to analyze the various approaches to managing and delivering health care in several countries, both wealthy ones and those with fewer resources. The issues of cost, access, and quality will be emphasized as well as current and emerging issues and challenges.

- **EHS 607, Global Perspectives in Environmental Health (3 credits)**

**Delivery Format**

There is a need for this certificate in the local, national and international public health institutions. To meet these varied requirements we plan on offering this certificate in an online format. This makes it easier for participation of students in locations away from UAlbany.
V. FINANCIAL RESOURCE REQUIREMENTS AND SUPPORT

Any of the core courses offered during the academic year will be part of the general curriculum offered through the SPH. Courses offered in the summer session will be fully funded through student tuition. Students will also be able to take equivalent substitute classes reducing the burden on any specific course even further. No need for additional sections for any of the elective courses is envisaged. Curriculum development has been done in order to transaction the in-class offering of the courses to an online format.

Resources and Support

The School of Public Health’s Assistant Dean for Global Health will oversee the certificate program in concert with the School’s Director of Certificate Programs and the Associate Dean for Academic Affairs. Since many SPH faculty members have extensive academic and practice background in global health issues, no additional faculty will be needed to launch the certificate. If adjunct faculty or graduate students are needed to teach or assist with occasional courses, faculty buy-out funds and other SPH resources will cover the cost. A faculty committee will meet regularly to review applications and advise about certificate policy.

Computing Facilities

The School of Public Health maintains a student computing laboratory with desk top computers and all software frequently used in public health teaching and research. The school also maintains a fully functional and modern computer teaching laboratory which can accommodate 32 students in a single class session. Almost all of the graduate students own laptops equipped with appropriate software.

Centers

The Director and Associate Directors of the Center for Global Health will also provide support to the program by teaching the introductory course in global health, comparative health systems and providing lectures in other courses. The provide support where needed through funding of the graduate assistant assigned to the center. These individuals will also serve on the faculty steering committee.

Library Resources

Students will have full access to both University library and New York State Department of Health Library services including on-line access and intra-library loan services.

VI. FACULTY PROFILES (see faculty vitae in APPENDIX 2)

- **Carol Whittaker**, Clinical Associate Professor and Assistant Dean for Global Health will teach HPM 645, Introduction to Global Health (3 credits) and HPM 656, Comparative Health Systems (3 credits) - Professor Whittaker has extensive experience in international health, principles of public health, and public health leadership.
• **Stephens, P. Clay,** Assistant Professor will teach EPI 630, Global Perspectives in Epidemiology (3 credits) -- Professor Stephens is a recognized expert in the epidemiology of HIV/AIDS, STD’s Hepatidities and TB

• **Diane Dewar,** Associate Professor, Associate Dean for Academic Affairs will teach HPM 655, International Health Economics (3 credits) Professor Dewar has extensive experience in health insurance markets, health care utilization, economic evaluation of health policies and programs, medical technology assessments, critical care and chronic disease management.

• **David Carpenter,** Professor and Director of the University’s will teach EHS 607, Global Perspectives in Environmental Health (3 credits). Professor Carpenter has extensive experience in international health programs aimed at controlling the adverse health effects of environmental pollutants.

• Other School of Public Health faculty members who have extensive global experience have also volunteered to present selected lectures in these courses and to provide advice and mentoring to students interested in international experiences.